

**TEXT** Genesis 12:1-4; 15:1-6; 21:1-5

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE** Romans 4:3,17-21

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that the rewards which were promised to Abraham were given because of his faithfulness in implicitly obeying all that God commanded. They will recognize that they, too, can be assured of God’s blessing if they follow His divine leading.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. — Genesis 17:1

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. — Genesis 17:8

**ANSWER TITLE:** **Following God**  
**SEARCH TITLE:** **Abraham**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

Abraham, founder of the Hebrew nation, was spoken of by Paul the Apostle as being the “father of all them that believe.” God changed Abram’s name to Abraham, meaning “father of a multitude,” as a sign of God’s covenant with him.

Abraham’s original dwelling place was Ur of the Chaldees, where his family, descendants of Shem, settled. His father, Terah, was an idolator but God called for Abram to leave his father’s house and kindred, and he answered the

call. This undoubtedly is one reason God blessed Abraham’s life. In studying his life, the students will easily recognize that Abraham possessed the following characteristics: obedience, unselfishness, benevolence, prayerfulness, and faith.

Promised a land and descendants, Abraham lived most of his life without either. He is an example to Christian believers of any era, and he is repeatedly held up as an example of faith at its best.

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Abraham

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**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Romans 4:3,17-21

**KEY VERSE:** And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. — Genesis 17:8

## RESPONSES

1. Your students' responses may vary. Some possibilities may be a love for God, a desire to receive the promised blessing, or obedience to God's Word. Ask the students why obedience to God's Word is the key to receiving any spiritual blessing. Focus on the fact that obedience must be the basis for all our actions if we want to please God.

2. While we can speculate on this, the discussion should lead your class to conclude that Scripture does not reveal any particular influences encouraging Abram to follow God. He seemingly stepped out in simple faith to obey God's command. Ask your class to mention some of the influences which encourage them to obey God in our day. Some of these influences are the Spirit of God, the Word of God, godly examples, and parental teachings.

3. As you discuss this question, your group will likely bring out that others may be inspired by their obedience to follow God also, or to seek Him more diligently. This could be an opportunity for some of your students to role-play situations in which obedience or disobedience to God's Word brings a reaction in those who observe it. Some possibilities: on-the-job actions or reactions; faithfulness to God-given responsibilities; behavior in the home, among their peers. Ask your class to evaluate how the actions portrayed might possibly influence those who observed them.

Abram's implicit faith in what God said caused him to act in total obedience to God. For this faithfulness he was counted righteous, in turn receiving the promise, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." His faith, obedience, and righteousness brought about many promises including the miraculous birth of his son, Isaac. Through the lineage of Isaac, God fulfilled His promise to Abram of the Messiah who would provide the blessing of salvation to those of all generations. When God made that covenant, He also changed Abram's name to Abraham, because he would be a "father of many nations."

1. In Genesis 12:1-3, what do you think was the center of Abram's motivation?
  
2. Undoubtedly it would have been easier for Abram to provide for his family by staying near his father's house and kindred. What might have been some of the influences which caused him to make the decision to obey God?
  
3. Abram's obedience had direct effect on his family, and far-reaching effects on his descendants, and on believers even to our day. How might others be affected by our obedience to God?

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## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. God commanded Abram to make a certain offering, and he obeyed this instruction (Genesis 15:9-11). What is the significance of Abram's driving the fowls away? Parallel this to action we must take when we obey God by making a consecration He is requiring of us.

5. In Genesis 15:17, Abram received a witness—the smoking furnace and burning lamp which passed between the pieces of his sacrifice—that he would surely inherit the land of Canaan. What are some ways we can know when our offering or consecration has been accepted by God?

6. Included in this promise to Abram was the miraculous birth of a son. How did Abram respond, even though he knew the circumstances of his and Sarah's advanced ages? See Romans 4:20,21.

7. In Genesis 17:19, God gave Abraham a command regarding the son that would be born to him. What was that command and where in our text do we find that Abraham obeyed God in this also?

8. According to the key verse, what was the extent of God's promise to Abraham?

4. Though God did not immediately send the witness that his offering had been accepted, Abram proved his determination to obey by keeping the sacrifice on the altar and driving the fowls away. We, too, will face times when the enemy of our souls will make every effort to keep us from obeying what the Lord requires of us. We should emphasize the importance of making and keeping the consecration He has laid on our hearts.

5. Class discussion may bring out several ways the Spirit of God can reveal that a consecration or offering to God has been accepted. Some of these may be: praying through on the matter until an inner assurance is received; the request or petition is granted; a specific promise from God's Word is claimed and fulfilled.

6. He believed God's promise in spite of the circumstances. Class discussion should bring out that the things which are impossible for man are possible with God. Encourage your students to cite specific examples of times when faith triumphed over adverse conditions in their lives or the lives of others.

7. The command was that he should name his son Isaac. Genesis 21:3 shows that Abraham obeyed in this. The point could be made here that God requires our obedience in things that would seem small or unimportant, as well as in the more serious aspects of our lives. If we can learn to obey in the small things, then obedience in other matters will be easier.

8. Abraham's seed, through the son of promise, would receive all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession because of his obedience and faithfulness. Bring out through discussion the interesting fact that God is restoring this land to the Jews in our time, though they were driven from their homeland nearly two thousand years ago. God's promises never fail. Obedience to God brings the blessing, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. See Romans 3:29 and Acts 2:39.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What are some of the ways that God blessed Abraham's life?

Why did God bless Abraham?

Why do you think Abraham obeyed God?

What characteristic do you admire most about Abraham?

Besides moving from Haran, what are some other ways Abraham showed obedience to God?

Do you think Abraham would have received God's blessing if he hadn't moved from Haran? Why or why not?

What are the benefits of obeying the Lord?

Is obedience learned, or is it something with which you are born?

Do you think some people are naturally more obedient than other people? Explain.

Are there times when you shouldn't be obedient? Explain.

When is it hard to be obedient? When is it easy to be obedient?

In our ANSWER story, how was David rewarded for his faithfulness in witnessing for Christ?

## THINGS TO DO

Buy or make a sign that says "Moving Sale." Hang this sign in your classroom and, after drawing attention to the sign, ask your students if they have ever had to move away from family or friends. How did it feel? Was it hard to leave friends behind? Lead into the lesson by telling the class of the move that Abraham made according to God's command.

Prepare a map of the Old Testament world with the travels of Abraham outlined in a bright color (the line of Abraham's travels should go from Ur to Haran to Canaan). Title this

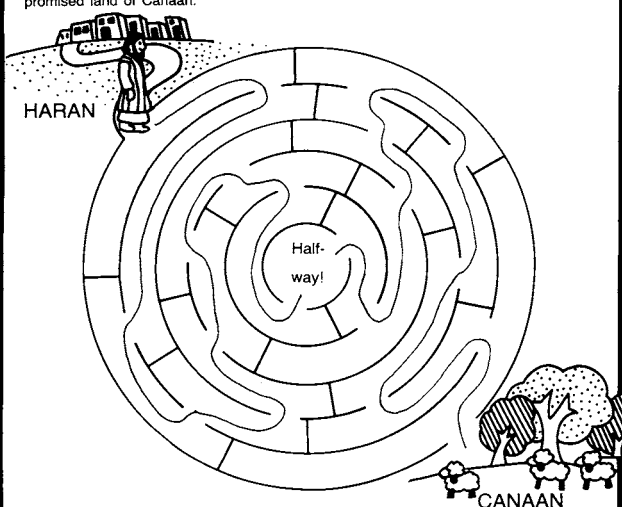
map "Obedience in Action," and hang it up in your classroom. Ask your students if they know why "Obedience in Action" is a good title for this map. Refer to the map throughout the lesson.

Select someone in your class to play the part of Abraham (he could wear a simple costume). Have the rest of the class prepare questions to ask "Abraham." Encourage questions about feelings; e.g., Was it hard to move away from your home? Were you scared when you entered a strange land? Why did you obey God when He told you to offer Isaac as a sacrifice? After interviewing Abraham, you may want to give other students a chance to provide alternate answers to the questions.

## Answers for ANSWER

### The Promised Land

Abraham was faithful and obeyed God. Work this maze and help Abraham get to the promised land of Canaan.



HARAN

Half-way!

CANAAN

God promised Abraham that he would have a big family. Unscramble the words below and put them in the right order. You'll have a slogan that you should always remember.

ODG    EPSKE    SHI    MISSEPRO

GOD    KEEPS    HIS    PROMISES